



Motu Kaikoura

*An open sanctuary
promoting wilderness
education, ecosystem
restoration and public
recreation on an offshore
island.*

KAKA COMMENTS

MOTU KAIKOURA TRUST SUPPORTERS' NEWSLETTER ISSUE NO 27 JUNE 2019

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR OBJECTIVES

- Restoring the natural environment of Motu Kaikoura through natural regeneration
- Making Motu Kaikoura available for outdoor and environmental education
- Keeping Motu Kaikoura open and available to the public of NZ

Onwards and Upwards has been our goal for the past year. We have had some busy times with the opening of the new lodge, the upgrading of the cabins for summer guests and the final submission of the Management Plan to the Minister of Conservation following the hearing of public submissions. All materials for solar installation are now finally on the island and the project should be completed shortly. Sprinkler system installed in the lodge will shortly be commissioned.

We rely very much on the availability of the DOC boat Hauturu and appreciate the service they provide for us, especially Sam Gambling who will always accommodate our supplies when possible.

The opening of the new lodge was held on 23 March with approx. 150 visitors mainly arriving on the Kawau Kat from Sandspit to the sound of many kakas. They were given a tour round the island with speakers giving an outline of the history of the island. Visitors were welcomed to the island by Rodney Ngawaka with replies by Mike Lee, Geoff Davidson and Chris Carter who was the Minister of Conservation when the island was bought.

Speakers for the opening were Jennifer Gill, CEO Foundation North who had assisted in the financing of the building, Anna Boow and Pip Newman, Architecture+Women, who built the lodge and their diary of that event later in the newsletter, and David Waters of APL Windows representing all the traders and firms who donated or discounted materials. Also thanks to New World for the discount on the afternoon tea supplies and Ecoware for the paper cups and serviettes.

The lodge ribbon was cut by Chairman, Rod Miller and Chris Carter, with the use of a rat trap, supervised by Geoff Davidson.





Visitors arriving on Motu Kaikoura



Rodney Ngawaka greeting visitors



Cutting the ribbon with rat trap



Entering the lodge for afternoon tea

Photos: Yeneh Badimayalew

The upgrading of the cabins was carried out by Warkworth Rotary members Jon Nicholson and Peter Johns. Rotary also provided the materials and financed this project. Jon and Peter were awarded Paul Harris Saphire pins by Warkworth Rotary for their work on the Motu Kaikoura project. Thanks also to Ross Sutherland for the supply of furniture, doors, carpets and bedding. Photos of the cabins can be seen on the website. We now have 4 cabins with a total of 8 rooms, fully furnished and capable of accommodating 24 people. Our first summer of renting was successful. One group who stayed over the summer was the Warkworth Forest and Bird and they have submitted a report on their stay later in the newsletter.

Grants – we appreciate the grants towards our continued work on the island.

This last year grants were:

- Lion Foundation for insurance and sprinkler system
- DOC Community fund for ranger and rat control
- Gt Barrier Local Board for rat control
- Native Forest Restoration Trust towards Kawau Kat for lodge opening.

As a volunteer organisation it is imperative that we continue with fundraising to enable us to operate successfully.

Surveys –

- Rodents Research by Thomas Bodey
- Jessica Perez continuing with dolphin research
- Auckland Council Marine Biosecurity



Birds – Mel Galbraith - The general perception about the bird populations over the last few years has been that of small increases, largely through increased visibility of birds as we wander the island. The data now appears to be supporting these perceptions, with overall diversity increasing over a period of 5 years.

Also increasing over a similar period are the tui and kereru counts – this is a good sign as these are nectar/fruit specialists so have been ecologically limited in the past. So we are likely to be seeing the effect of vegetation recovery following the deer eradication, and the rats maintained at a low level.

Also obvious are large numbers of trees like puriri that are seeding under the pines. As these come on-stream with fruit and flowers, we can envisage a snowball effect of resources.

The next botanical survey is scheduled for 2021, so we eagerly await the results of this to confirm an increasing rate of the natural propagation of native trees.



Bird monitoring group

Hemi Wihongi Hester Cooper, Mel Galbraith,
Josie Galbraith, Osker Williams, Paul Bell-Butler

Kereru near the lodge

Damselfly at old farm pond

Photos: Diane Fraser

Rodents – Thanks to Mike Lee for his continued management of rodent control on Motu Kaikoura. Not an easy task. Rodent Report on the website www.motukaikoura.org.nz

Staffing – Contractors Clint and Jacinda Stannard continue to carry out rodent control and monitoring including day to day management of the island which is now becoming popular for visitors. Nick Mitchell, volunteer, has been able to help reduce their workload and host visitors.

Supporters – We have a continuing number of supporters and their financial assistance is appreciated. Newsletters have been well received and we endeavour to keep everybody up to date with the activities on the island. Thanks to Rosalie Miller and to those who supply contributions.

Website – Everything you need to know is on our website still developing. Thank you to Yeneh Badimayalew for her continued enthusiasm in keeping this up to date.

Trustees – have met 11 times during the year. Our treasurer, Peter Hutton, was reluctantly farewelled at our October meeting. Peter had given us 12 years of invaluable service and we wish him all the best in his retirement. We are fortunate now to have Kim Grove as our treasurer.

Island Visits - I visit the island on a regular basis and have now done 440 flights plus 10 boat trips. I know which I prefer.

Thank you all for your continued support for the ongoing task of managing this very special and unique scenic reserve.

Rod Miller
Chair
Mou Kaikoura Trust

www.motukaikoura.org.nz





Motu Kaikoura Lodge

DIARY FROM ARCHITECTURE + WOMEN

Dave Strachan and Maria Hosking, the Architects from SGA who designed the lodge, can't be with us today, so they have asked us to speak on their behalf. Our names are Anna and Pip, and we represent the 16 strong team of women who built this whare. For those of you who don't know, the build team was made up of women, all architects (and one engineer!), who enrolled to be part of a building workshop offered by Strachan Group Architects and Architecture + Women. In return for the course fee we would "gain confidence and further knowledge on a construction site", as well as 'on the tools' experience under the expert eyes of Dave Strachan, Architect, the builders from Crate Architectural Innovations and, during the build, JR Hosking Carpenters.

As you have heard, some of us had our course fees sponsored by industry suppliers, but all of us volunteered our free time, every Friday and Saturday for 4 consecutive months to be part of what became a labour of love. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our families, some of whom are here today, for their support; they lived with absent partners and mothers throughout the build, to allow us to dedicate our time to constructing this lodge.

Finally, this whare wouldn't be standing here today without the many, many volunteer hours from Lynda Simmons, of Architecture + Women, who organised the builders, rounded up sponsors, and worked tirelessly on promotion and publication to support the build.

The Lodge area is located on the southern side of the island, its purpose to provide temporary accommodation for island research workers, educational groups and maintenance volunteers. Maria and Dave's design responded to the existing accommodation huts service buildings, various view shafts and directions of approach

They pushed the saw-tooth form further to the south, reaching up to get the north sun in as early as possible. In terms of construction methodology there were two apparent options – 1) to cart the building up the steep bank stick by stick or 2). To heli-lift larger components for assembly for economic and environmental advantage they picked the latter.

The programme was pretty simple an open plan kitchen living dining area that could cater 20-30 people. SGA created a directional breezeway through the centre, with tables on castors able to be pushed on to decks depending on weather and wind conditions



They bundled up a concept design with costings from a QS and a feasibility report and assisted the Trust members in applying for funding to get the project off the ground.

Three years later SGA had moved in to a new studio and workshops in Kingsland...a big dream to bring their architectural team back to the craft of making and allow the opportunity for collaboration within the industry. The Trust still didn't have enough funds to get the project off the ground but SGA had an idea how to.

Dave Strachan had 8-years of experience in pre-fabricated building projects having run Studio 19, a design and build project with Unitec architecture students.

A collaboration with Architecture + Women NZ was formed, this was when a call went out to women architects to take a place on the course and to learn to build. The loge would be built using the new workshop space at SGA architects, and the entire building would be prefabricated in the adjoining workspace, belonging to Crate Builders. Thanks to the many sponsors and this unique collaboration of Architects, builders and volunteers, we had the means to help the Trust get the project off the ground...now we just needed the method.

For a pretty simple rectangular box the amount of detailing required to fabricate the building is quite scary and a few sleepless nights were spent dreaming of various panel connections.

The first day arrived in no time and the girls were all dressed up and rearing to go, all there on their own accord to become better architects by connecting physically with the industry in which they work to get that invaluable hands on experience.

We all came into this project with a level of understanding of putting a building together - but what does it mean to build a building only to take it apart ... and then build it again? Tasked with an already challenging project, our team of inexperienced builders, who initially spent longer making sure everyone had a go with the power tools and being very wary of the nail gun, quickly learnt that it was going to take a lot of accuracy, meticulous planning and perseverance, along with a very patient teacher – Dave.

Over the course of the weeks, we gained more confidence in using the tools and respect for materials that could stand up to the tasks we were setting for them – for example the Spax screws that were able to withstand being drawn back and re-driven on the deck boards, which were screwed into place meticulously and then unscrewed and packed away to be installed again on site, always using the same screws.

Prefabricating the building inside a workshop in the city, without having to fight with the wind, rain or sun, meant we were able to ensure that installation on site would be far quicker than a traditional building process.

The building was flashed, windows were installed and glazed, and joints were taped - all while we were still putting the building together. Another benefit of prefabricating the building entirely off site meant that when we came to build it again, here on an island miles away from any Bunnings, we knew exactly how many screws and fixings we would need, and we had counted them into individual boxes, we didn't want to run out of nails and have to ask Rod to fly back for more!

Roof beams and lintels were cut to length and finished – temporarily installed and screwed in place, to ensure they fit. Meticulous accuracy and measuring twice paid off, we were so proud as we watched some experienced builders hoist the huge beams into place, and they slotted in perfectly.

While the inconvenience of inclement weather didn't prove to be an issue during Round 1, building inside was not without its challenges - particularly when you're dealing with a 3.6m high building, within a space that isn't all that much higher. There was much crawling, climbing and squeezing around each other.



Long ponytails became a health and safety issue, and more than 1 of the builders had a Stanley knife emergency haircut.

To complete the package, extensive custom designed cabinetry was cut on a CNC machine and flat-packed to be fabricated and installed on site.

The logistics of the pack up, transport and assembly were the most challenging parts of the project. Maria spoke to everyone she could that had worked with helicopters and picked their brains in lieu of personal experience. We used a standard hiab and manpower to dis-assemble the 90m2 building in the tight workshop space – every inch of the site was used to flat pack and store things as we pulled the building apart and worked through our methodology.

Glazed windows were protected with polystyrene and then panels were wrapped with builder's board protection, polythene, and strapped.

Maria devised a coding system, which was spray painted on to components so they were instantly recognizable and to highlight where the connections would be re-made under more stressful conditions.

Maria also made series of diagrams to give step-by-step instructions of where each of the 22 drops would be located on the site, and what had to be done sequentially and efficiently at each drop to prepare for the following ones.

So we had a well thought out plan but what we couldn't count on was the weather,. luckily the weather gods pulled through and on the 30th of November 2017 we would set sail.

Stress and excitement levels were high...we had spent weeks not just building but making lists and schedules to cover everything from fixings, to expanding foam, to cooking utensils. (We had to feed and cater to 22 people). On top of all this we had to consider bio security. We were after all going to be working on an open wildlife sanctuary.

Before boarding we had an intense H&S induction form the helicopter pilot. What we were about to do could be done safely, but any deviance from the plan would put the whole team at risk, and the consequences could be fatal. Then we were on the boat.

On arrival we got to work setting up: we marked out zones for the helicopter drops, and made sure everything was weighted down that needed to be, and checked the foundations that contractors had built from plan.

Nothing could have prepared us for the helicopter drop, the noise or the down draft. It was heart stopping to watch the boys balancing on the bearers receiving 600-900kg floor cassettes every 6 minutes. In between drops we ran on command, unwrapped and removed the packaging so it didn't become a hazard.

In just one hour all the floor cartridges were placed. The 17 of us women ran under the subfloor to apply 'z' nails and nail plates. The Noise was exhilarating. That night, floor finished, we celebrated.

December 2nd & 3rd we saw the chartered vessel arrive in the sheltered passage out from the site.

The completed floor platform made it safer to receive the large bundles of wall panels but we still needed to unwrap, stand and fix the walls in between drops, we now knew how fast the helicopters turnaround time was, so intermediate drops of lining, cabinetry, roofing, etc, were made to buy us time while we erected the walls.



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Pressure was high and when the last wind beam piece was lifted into place by helicopter, we all cheered with relief and satisfaction.

Work continued at pace: Whilst the builders manhandled the 70kg SIP roof panels on to the site the rest of us continued with the countless tasks of finishing, flashing and preparing further construction details.

This was the Women's Time to shine. The builders wanted a fixing or a driver bit? We had it. The deck needed to be laid in a day? We had a pattern to follow.

We had already built this building once, in a slow pedantic way, under cover. This time was for real in the buildings home and resting place – we had a clearer idea of how to assemble the various components – with quiet confidence – still learning – still collaborating – this was about teamwork.

By the last evening we had the roof on and boy did we celebrate, we had just erected this beautiful whare in 4 days flat! We had more delicious cooking, starlight swims, whisky and Dave on the guitar – we can't tell you who won the dance off, the results are disputed!

The 2 return trips since December saw smaller teams cover off, cabinetry, internal linings, exterior decks, pergola, under ply & insulation, joinery, cutting corrugate cladding, electrics and plumbing.

The latest trip was a week in January, and it was HOT. The best time to work was early morning and late at night, and we did both. There were compulsory swims at lunch, where we were treated to Kaka overhead and stingray in the water. This served to remind us of why we were there: to create this building which will hopefully encourage others, who have a passion for New Zealand's natural heritage, to visit Motu Kaikoura and become active participants in its restoration

Please follow this link for a time lapse of the 'Pack down' and on site 're-build':

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYjOLf1pt8&feature=youtu.be=vYjOLf1_pt8&feature=youtu.be

From Anna Boow and Pip Newman on behalf of the Architecture+Women Build Team

KAIKOURA LODGE OPENING

Hillarey McGregor

The weather was perfect, the history shared on the vessel about the island although limited, was great, both from the Trust and Iwi. The circumnavigation was also enjoyable. It was sad that it could not be heard at the same time with our Aotea residents due to lack of room on the vessel.

Hearing talks around the design, the logistics of getting the building to the island, was not only interesting but also amusing. Rod Miller's unwavering dedication to the Motu Kaikoura Trust is commendable.

As Mike Lee spoke, my mind went back to the involvement of some of those involved at the time of the "Save the Islands Trust". I can still see them so clearly, my mum Whetu McGregor, John Graham Sally Coombes, Will Scarlet.



I can still hear my mum saying how important it is as Tangata Whenua to take our rightful place on Motu Kaikoura and karanga the visitors on to our whenua. I felt her with us on that day.

I thought of all those that I know would have liked to have been there but couldn't for whatever the reason and I am honoured that my children now stand with me.

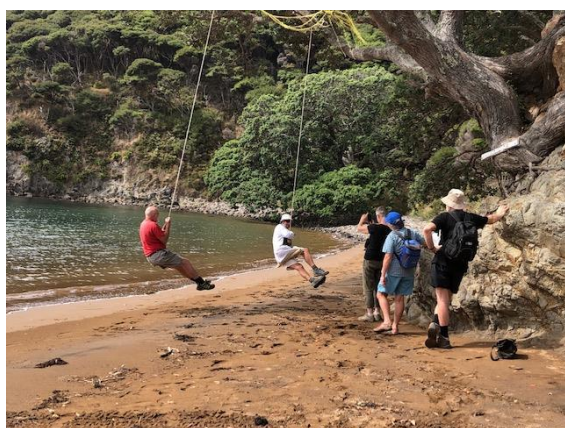
WARKWORTH FOREST & BIRD

Raewyn Morrison

22 members and friends of the Warkworth Branch of Forest and Bird spent the last weekend in March on Motu Kaikoura. For many it was a first time visit to the island. Ours was the first group to use the lodge after its grand opening the weekend before. The group left Sandspit on the Norma Jean on a Friday morning and had a rather rough trip over to the island; however, spirits lifted once we went past Hauturu (Little Barrier) – Motu Kaikoura was in sight!

The weather was generally kind, and people took the opportunity to get in a late summer swim at Bradshaw Cove. The lodge itself is well appointed and equipped for a large group. Everyone appreciated the raucous calls of the kaka in the pine trees around the lodge and enjoyed watching the abundant banded rail population of the lawn and surrounds.

The group took advantage of several different walks around the island over the weekend and some of the party did some serious botanising.



Young at heart



An enthusiastic botanist

The views were incredible from the various viewpoints. It was a great opportunity to meet new people, catch up with old friends, explore a new place and have some great discussions. We'll be back.

A BOTANNICAL REPORT

Maureen Young

At the end of March, I had an opportunity to spend a weekend on the island with the Warkworth Forest & Bird group. On the first afternoon I walked the road to Bradshaw Cove and noticed that the road was being widened from the airstrip down towards the Lodge. As there are a couple of important ferns growing on the roadside, I pointed them out to Clint. Although they had been marked in the past, new growth had covered the markers, so Clint will re-mark them. Fortunately, neither grow on the corner that is proving most troublesome.

As the road descended towards Bradshaw Cove it was pleasing to see that both akeake (*Dodonaea viscosa*) and kumarahou (*Pomaderris kumeraho*) are increasing in numbers on the roadside. The autumn-flowering



orchid, *Corunastylis pumila*, was blooming in the red clay ditches. So tiny is this plant that it takes a practised eye to see it, but by getting down on hands and knees and using a magnifying glass, clusters of perfect little red and green flowers could be seen.

At Bradshaws I was pleased to see a native praying mantis on a hebe bush – I only see South African ones at home.

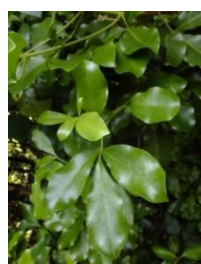
On the return journey I spotted a little native prostrate herb, *Nertera depressa*, growing on the roadside. This is a new addition to the island's species list.

As Saturday gave us a full day's botanising, together with Lyn Wade and Jenny Enderby, I walked the main NW Ridge Track and returned on the SW Perimeter Track via Taraire Valley.

Although the vegetation along the ridge is largely composed of manuka /kanuka, there are many broad-leaved saplings getting established in the understorey. These include mapou (*Myrsine australis*), five-finger (*Pseudopanax arboreus*), puriri (*Vitex lucens*), wharangi (*Melicope ternata*) and mangleo (*Litsea calicaris*)



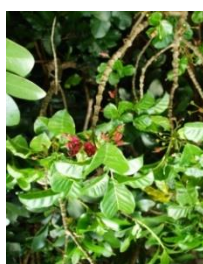
Litsea calicaris



Meliscope tenata



Pseudopanax arboreus



Puriri



Ramarama

All good food sources to attract birds. The dainty, and very pretty white-flowered member of the Convolvulus family, *Calystegia tuguriorum*, was growing in numbers over the prickly Coprosma (*Coprosma rhamnoides*), where there was a light-gap. Prior to this we had only ever recorded one plant growing at Crawford Bay.

The everlasting-daisy shrub, *Helichrysum lanceolatum*, which has been expanding in numbers since the deer eradication, is now growing in great abundance on all the rocky knolls along the ridge.

The best finds of the day were reserved for the SW Perimeter Track. Before reaching Taraire Valley I was excited to find a robust sapling of toro (*Myrsine salicina*), and in Taraire Valley 6 or 7 young ramarama (*Lophomyrtus bullata*) plants, which were growing in close formation under a high broad-leaved canopy. As both of these grow on Great Barrier but have never before been seen on Motu Kaikoura, it wasn't hard to figure out that they had arrived via the stomach contents of kereru – the most efficient method of regeneration.

Also in Taraire Valley were a dozen or so seedlings of nikau (*Rhopalostylis sapida*). My records show that I had only seen 1 adult and 2 seedlings on the island before this.

Two new exotics I spotted, plantain (*Plantago major*) and track rush (*Juncus tenuis*) are not likely to be troublesome, but the bella donna lily (*Amaryllis belladonna*) growing near the Lodge might have to be watched.



It's that time of year again when the dew never leaves the top lawn and I struggle to get my washing dry outside but living out here through all the seasons and over the years has enabled us to appreciate how much has changed since we arrived only a decade ago, slowly gaining more responsibility and insight. One of the things I'm really grateful to be here to see is just how much the undergrowth is taking off now, along with the increasing number and diversity of birds here which is heart-warming, exciting and a huge motivator for continued effort.

Since Christmas we've caught nearly one thousand rats in traps, 938 to be exact. I find maggoty rats not so repulsive anymore now that I am more accustomed to them. Our monitoring results from May revealed there was a density of 10%. Since then the rat numbers we have been catching have decreased, which is a relief, as we've been going pretty hard out!



Koreru on the lawn

Lately we've established a relationship where the Koreru know we won't chase them as we walk by, often allowing us to pass within two metres of them as long as we don't stop and stare. Here they look suddenly more wary because they have never had someone try to sneak a photo before. In the last two months, most of their time has been spent just here, preferring lots of clover over anything else!

A bunch of High school students who came to interview us in the annual Hillary Outdoors/Hillcrest High school programme.



We have found that a good "ice breaker" when introducing ourselves to a large group of young people is to just get stuck in for a while on a combined project and then have a question and answer time.

Hillcrest High school students getting started on moving the batteries for the solar power from the wharf to the lodge.

Thanks to Dalton International, the great NZ company specialising in safety apparel and equipment for donating protective overalls and respirator masks so that future volunteers can spray safely.

MOTU KAIKOURA TRUST SUPPORTERS

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Thank you.
Rosalie Miller
Motu Kaikoura Supporters

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*“Having vision is not enough.
Change comes through realising the vision
And turning it into reality.”
Sir Peter Blake*

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